

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 3482

E. O. 11562:

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJ: 25TH PARTY CONGRESS: NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CHANGES

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1. SUMMARY. L.I. BREZHNEV WAS REELECTED AS GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE CPSU, MARCH 5, AND ALMOST ALL OF HIS LEADERSHIP COLLEAGUES WERE RETAINED IN OFFICE WITH HIM. SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT CHANGES WERE ANNOUNCED. D.S. POLYANSKIY, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, WAS NOT RE-ELECTED TOT THE POLITBURO. CANDIDATE POLITBURO MEMBERS G. A. ROMANOV (FIRST SECRETARY LENINGRAD OBKOM) AND D.S. USTINOV (SECRETARY OF THE CC) WERE PROMOTED TO FULL POLITBURO MEMBERSHIP. G. A. ALIYEV (FIRST SECRETARY AZERBAYDZHAN) WAS ADDED TO THE LIST OF CANDIDATE POLITBURO MEMBERS. AND TWO ADDITIONAL SECRETARIES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WERE CHOSEN: M.V. ZIMYANIN, CHIEF EDITOR OF PRAVDA, AND K.U. CHERNENKO, CHIEF OF THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION TO THE PARTY'S HIGHEST ORGANS REINFORCE THE IMAGE OF GENERAL STABILITY AND CONTINUITY DISPLAYED THROUGHOUT THE CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

2. TO NO ONE'S SURPRISE BREZHNEV ANNOUNCED FROM THE PODIUM OF THE 25TH CPSU CONGRESS THAT HE HAD BEEN ELECTED BY THE FIRST PLENUM OF THE NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE AS GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE; THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS GREETED WITH THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE. THE GENERAL SECRETARY THEN PROCEEDED TO READ OUT THE LIST OF POLITBURO MEMBERS STARTING WITH HIMSELF AND THEREAFTER MENTIONING EACH MEMBER IN ALPHABETICAL, RATHER THAN RANK, ORDER -- A DEPARTURE FROM THE PREVIOUS TWO CONGRESSES -- MUCH TO THE DISMAY OF KREMLINOLOGISTS.

3. EVERY MEMBER OF THE OLD POLITBURO WAS RETURNED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF D.S. POLYANSKIY. IN ADDITION TO BREZHNEV, APPLAUSE WAS PARTICULARLY STRONG FOR KOSYGIN, KUNAYEV, PODGORNY, AND SUSLOV. TWO NEW POLITBURO MEMBERS, G.V. ROMANOV AND D.S. USTINOV, WERE ELECTED; BOTH HAD BEEN CANDIDATE POLITBURO MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY. ALL CANDIDATE POLITIBURO MEMBERS NOT PROMOTED WERE RETAINED. G.I. ALIYEV, FIRST SECRETARY OF AZERBAYDZHAN WAS ADDED, FILLING THE CAUCASUS' SLOT LEFT VACANT SINCE MZHAVANADZE'S REMOVAL IN 1972.

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4. BREZHNEV THEN READ THE LIST OF PARTY SECRETARIES IN PROTOCOL RATHER THAN ALPHABETICAL ORDER. ALL PREVIOUS SECRETARIES WERE RETAINED AND TWO NEW SECRETARIES ADDED -- M.V. ZIMYANIN (CHIEF EDITOR OF PRAVDA) AND K.U. CHERNENKO (CHIEF OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S GENERAL DEPARTMENT). THE ORDER IN WHICH SECRETARIES WERE MENTIONED IS AS FOLLOWS: BREZHNEV, SUSLOV, KIRILENKO, KULAKOV, USTINOV, PONOMAREV, KAPITONOV, DOLGIKH, KATUSHEV, ZIMYANIN, AND CHERNENKO.

5. THE GENERAL SECRETARY ALSO NOTED THAT A. YA. PEL'SHE WILL REMAIN AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY CONTROL COMMITTEE AND THAT G.I. SIZOV WILL STAY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL AUDITING COMMISSION.

6. COMMENT: WHILE THERE ARE A FEW CHANGES AND SURPRISES IN THE RESULTS ANNOUNCED TODAY, THE ELECTIONS FOR THE MOST PART CONVEY A "STEADY AS SHE GOES" IMPRESSION THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED THE ENTIRE CONGRESS. OF THE 25 MEN IN THE POLITBURO/SECRETARIST LEADERSHIP PRIOR TO THIS CONGRESS, ONLY ONE -- POLYANSKIY -- HAS BEEN REMOVED. GIVEN THE AGRICULTURE FAILURES IN 1972 AND PARTICULARLY IN 1975 HIS REMOVAL IS NO REAL SURPRISE. INDEED, HE WAS THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE LEADERSHIP TO HAVE CRITICISM AIMED DIRECTLY AT HIS ORGANIZATION AND WORK AT THIS CONGRESS. AND WAS CRITICIZED BY NAME AT THE PRECEDING UKRAINIAN CONGRESS. IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHETHER HE WILL RETAIN HIS CENTRAL COMMITTEE SEAT AND MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE PORTFOLIO. IN ANY CASE, HIS REMOVAL FROM THE POLITBURO ELIMINATES ONE MORE HIGH POLITBURO OFFICIAL NOT CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH BREZHNEV AND PLACES AGRICULTURAL POLICY EVEN MORE FIRMLY IN THE HANDS OF THE BREZHNEV-KULAKOV TEAM.

7. THE PROMOTION FOR ROMANOV HAS BEEN RUMORED A NUMBER OF TIMES DURING THE PAST YEAR AND WAS INDICATED BY THE ATTENTION HE RECEIVED AT THE CONGRESS WHEN HE CHAIRED A SESSION OF THE PROCEEDINGS. HIS RELATIONSHIP TO BREZHNEV IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. HIS CAREER IS BASED SOLELY IN LENINGRAD AND, THUS, DOES NOT OVERLAP WITH BREZHNEV. YET, IN SPEECHES AND IN MEETINGS WITH FOREIGNERS HE HAS PRAISED BREZHNEV HIGHLY AND INDICATED HIS CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GENERAL SECRETARY. ON BALANCE, HIS PROMOTION IS PROBABLY CONFIDENTIAL

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A PLUS FOR BREZHNEV.

8. USTINOV'S PROMOTION HAS NOT BEEN EXPECTED. HOWEVER, GIVEN HIS LEADING ROLE IN THE SOVIET MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AND HIS CLOSE ATTENTION TO QUESTIONS OF DEFENSE POLICY GENERALLY, HIS ELEVATION IS NO SHOCK. WE SUSPECT THAT HIS PROMOTION, AS WELL AS THAT OF ROMANOV, IS DE JURE RECOGNITION FOR A JOB WELL DONE. IN USTINOV'S CASE IT IS ALSO OBVIOUS RECOGNITION FOR THE POLICY ROLE HE ALREADY HAD IN DEFENSE AND SPACE MATTERS. HE PRESUMABLY JOINS MARSHALL GRECHKO IN THE POLITBURO AS AN ADVOCATE OF A STRONG SOVIET DEFENSE POSTURE.

9. WE HAD ASSUMED THAT A PARTY LEADER IN ONE OF THE THREE

CAUCASUS REPUBLICS WOULD BE GIVEN A CANDIDATE SEAT ON THE  
POLITBURO. THE MAIN QUESTION WAS WHETHER SHEVARDNADZE (FIRST  
SECRETARY OF GEORGIA) OR ALIYEV WOULD BE CHOSEN. BOTH  
CONSISTENTLY HAVE PRAISED BREZHNEV WITH ORIENTAL EFFUSIVENESS  
AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY. ALIYEV HAS NOW WON THE RACE. HE IS  
THE ONLY LEADERSHIP MEMBER WHOSE CAREER DEVELOPED WITHIN  
THE INTERNAL SECURITY ORGANS. DESPITE HIS LACK OF CAREER  
LINKS TO BREZHNEV, HOWEVER, HIS SUPPORT FOR THE GENERAL  
SECRETARY AND BREZHNEV'S POLICIES INDICATES THAT THIS CHANGE  
ALSO IS A PLUS FOR BREZHNEV.

10. IT HAD BEEN EXPECTED THAT A SECRETARY WOULD BE  
APPOINTED TO TAKE CHARGE OF THE CULTURAL FIELD AT THIS

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USLO PEKING  
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AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
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CONGRESS (TO REPLACE DEMICHEV), BUT THERE WAS NO  
SOLID INDICATION WHO THIS WOULD BE. OF THE TWO NEW  
APPOINTMENTS TO THE SECRETARIAT, M.V. ZIMYANIN WILL  
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PROBABLY FILL THIS SLOT. INDEED, HE WAS ONE OF A NUMBER  
OF PEOPLE RUMORED TO BE UNDER CONSIDERATION  
FOR THE POST. HE HAS SERVED AS CHIEF EDITOR OF PRAVDA  
FOR THE PAST ELEVEN YEARS, A SIGNIFICANT APPARATUS ASSIGN-  
MENT. BEFORE THAT, HOWEVER, HE WAS IN DIPLOMATIC WORK AND  
SERVED AS AMBASSADOR TO NORTH VIETNAM AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND  
BRIEFLY AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. EARLIER  
IN HIS CAREER HE HELD IMPORTANT PARTY POSTS IN BELORUSSIA.  
HE WOULD SEEM TO HAVE A CAREER ASSOCIATION WITH GROMYKO AND SUSLOV,  
WHO HAS GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST  
MOVEMENT AFFAIRS AND EVEN WITH MAZUROV AND MASHEROV. IT IS  
ALSO PROBABLE THAT HIS MOST RECENT ASSIGNMENT WAS UNDER THE  
SUPERVISION OF SUSLOV. THUS, THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF HIS  
APPOINTMENT ARE NOT CLEAR AT THIS TIME. IF HE DOES FILL THE CULTURAL  
POST, HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE A HARD LINE APPROACH  
TOWARD THE ARTS AND INTELLECTUAL DISSIDENTS.

11. K.U. CHERNEKO'S APPOINTMENT HAD BEEN FORE-  
SHADOWED BY A SERIES OF AWARDS HE RECEIVED ON MARCH 2. UP TO  
THIS TIME THERE WAS NO PARTICULAR INDICATION OF HIS IMPENDING  
RISE. CHERNENKO'S CAREER ASSOCIATION WITH THE GENERAL  
SECRETARY EXTENDS OVER MORE THAN 20 YEARS. IN HIS PAST WORK  
HE HAS SPECIALIZED IN GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND IN  
AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA WORK. HIS CURRENT  
ASSIGNMENT AS CHIEF OF THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT IN-  
VOLVES THE PROCESSING OF COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRES-  
PONDENCE WITHIN THE POLITBURO AND SECRETARIAT. WHAT  
HIS PRECISE RESPONSIBILITIES WILL BE WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT  
REMAINS UNCERTAIN. HE MAY, OF COURSE, MERELY CONTINUE WITH  
HIS PRESENT CC APPARATUS FUNCTION. HOWEVER, IF  
KAPITONOV MOVES IN THE FUTURE TO FILL THE VACANT TRADE  
UNION POST, AS HAS BEEN RUMORED, CHERNENKO MAY BECOME  
THE PARTY ORGANS SECRETARY. WHATEVER HIS RESPONSIBILITIES,

HIS PROMOTION TO THE SECRETARIAT BRINGS A CLOSE SUPPORTER OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY INTO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE PARTY AND UNQUESTIONABLY STRENGTHENS BREZHNEV'S POSITION WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT.

12. THE PROTOCOL RANKING OF SECRETARIES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE GIVEN BY BREZHNEV AT THE 25TH CONGRESS WAS SIMILAR TO THAT GIVEN AFTER THE 24TH. THE ONLY CHANGE  
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WAS THAT PONOMAREV WAS LISTED AHEAD OF KAPITONOV AND OTHER SECRETARIES, AS BEFITS HIS CANDIDATE POLITBURO STATUS. THE NEW SECRETARIES WERE LISTED AT THE END. IT IS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST THAT DOLGIKH WAS LISTED AHEAD OF KATUSHEV, WHEREAS THE SEATING ARRANGEMENT AT THE CONGRESS INDICATED THE REVERSE ORDER.

13. WE THINK IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT KAPITONOV (FOR THREE CONGRESSES) AND KATUSHEV (FOR TWO) HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ADVANCE FROM THEIR SECRETARIAT POSITION INTO A FORMAL EXECUTIVE ROLE IN THE POLITBURO, EVEN THOUGH OTHERS (KULAKOV, USTINOV, DEMICHEV, AND PONOMAREV) HAVE DONE SO. THE REASONS FOR THIS ARE UNCERTAIN-- PARTICULARLY IN KATUSHEV'S CASE. KATUSHEV IS SUPPOSEDLY A BREZHNEV PROTEGE AND IS VERY IMPORTANT IN COMMUNIST BLOC RELATIONS. SOME OBSERVERS HAVE FELT THAT HIS AGE, PERSONAL CONNECTIONS AND AMBITION MIGHT MAKE HIM A CONTENDER FOR THE TOP JOB WHEN THE BREZHNEV LEADERSHIP RETIRES, AS YET, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT HE HAS THE POLITICAL STRENGTH TO DO SO; INDEED, THIS CONGRESS HAS LEFT HIM IN A STILL VERY JUNIOR POSITION WITHIN THE LEADERSHIP, WELL BEHIND OTHER PRESUMABLY AMBITIOUS APPARATUS OFFICIALS-- SHCHERBITSKIY, KULAKOV, AND ROMANOV.

14. THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION ARE A DEFINITE PLUS FOR BREZHNEV. THEY ENDORSE BREZHNEV'S MANAGEMENT OF THE PARTY AND INDICATE GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH THE POLICY LINE AND THE POLITICAL TEAM CARRYING IT OUT. A POTENTIAL SCAPEGOAT HAS BEEN DESIGNATED FOR THE AGRICULTURAL FAILURES BUT OVERALL POLICY IN THIS AREA HAS BEEN AFFIRMED. THERE IS ALMOST NO INDICATION THAT THE REGIME IS PREPARING FOR A LEADERSHIP CHANGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE OR IS IN ANY WAY REJUVENATING ITSELF. ONE POTENTIAL FUTURE CONTENDER (ROMANOV) HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED BUT NO ONE AMONG THE RELATIVELY JUNIOR OFFICIALS HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY ADVANCE OVER HIS PEERS. WHILE WE DO NOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME LEADERSHIP CHANGES MIGHT BE MADE DURING THE NEXT SESSION OF THE SUPREME SOVIET/OR AT THE NEXT PLENUM

OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WE BELIEVE BREZHNEV REMAINS  
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FIRMLY IN THE SADDLE WITH NO REAL RIVALS FOR HIS JOB.

FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE NOT SEEM ANY EVIDENCE AT THIS  
CONGRESS OF FACTIONAL MANEUVERING WHICH WOULD CONFIRM  
THAT A "POWER STRUGGLE" IS INDEED TAKING PLACE BEHIND  
THE KREMLIN WALLS.

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